

**APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 30, 2004**

**ATTENDANCE:** Evonne M. Klein, First Selectwoman; Joseph Miceli;  
Barbara Thorne; Robert Harrel, Jr.; Linda Santarella

**STAFF:** John Crary, Administrative Officer

**CALL TO ORDER**

The First Selectwoman called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:50 p.m.

**FIRST SELECTWOMAN'S REPORT**

The First Selectwoman reported that in the past the Town had done things to remember September 11<sup>th</sup>. She stated that this year September 11<sup>th</sup> falls on a Saturday. She encouraged anyone that wished to do so to stop by the memorial behind the middle school. She asked members of the community to put their flags out and she stated that she would contact the churches to ring their bells in unison on that day. She reported that the Board of Selectmen will place a wreath at the memorial at 11:00 a.m. and extended an invitation to the Police and Fire Departments to join them.

First Selectman Klein reported that in response to the flooding incidents on August 21st, she and Public Works visited all the sites that were flooded. She stated that most issues were resolved to date, but they are continuing to work on solutions.

Ms. Klein reported that she met with the Deer Management Committee to discuss the deer population and hunting. She stated that the Committee will come back to the Board with a proposal regarding deer hunting.

Ms. Klein reported that the Shellfish Ad Hoc Committee met and that a final draft policy or ordinance will be presented to the Board at their September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Klein reported that the Post Road paving project has begun with milling scheduled for September 7<sup>th</sup> and then paving to follow on September 20<sup>th</sup>. The area to be paved is from Stamford moving east.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

Mr. Crary reported that he received 16 applications for last month's search for a Human Resources Director. He stated that 6 candidates were interviewed and it was then narrowed to 3 candidates. He announced that Alison Graham, formerly of Star Gas Partners, was chosen as the new Director of Human Resources and will begin employment on September 20, 2004.

Mr. Crary reported that he was working on parking permits and a voucher system proposal and is reviewing the parking rates in surrounding communities. He stated that he would begin discussions with the public on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **a) Barbara Cooke, Virgil Wenger and Tony Homicki – report on inquiry into Grand List**

Mr. Virgil Wenger reported that in the spring of 2004 it was found that the 10/1/03 Grand List, maintained by the Tax Collector and used by the Board of Finance to establish the mill rate, was \$60,000.000 greater than the values used by the Tax Collector in preparing the tax billings to property owners. He stated that this discrepancy had existed for the past three years, resulting in a loss of tax revenues of \$2,500,000 to \$3,000,000. He stated that an internal investigation by the Finance Director concluded that no properties had been omitted from the tax roll and the problem had been caused by human error. The Board of Selectmen then commissioned a further study by Cole Layer Trumble Company to determine if certain properties had failed to be properly assessed. He stated that the Building Department provided a list of 5600 building permits issued since 1997 and the Finance Director eliminated 3300 permits from this list that would not have resulted in a property reassessment. The remaining 2300 permits were compared to the Assessor's Grand List database and it was disclosed that 309 permits, totaling \$25,729,300 in assessed value, had not reached the Grand List. He added that there was no consistent pattern or reason why they did not get into the CAMA database system.

He reported that the Board of Finance then appointed a Special Committee consisting of himself and Barbara Cook, with the assistance of Tony Homicki, to investigate in more detail the systems and procedures of the Building Department, the Assessor's Office and Tax Collector's Office and to identify improvements to better integrate and coordinate activities of these departments so as to minimize problems in the future through better internal controls.

Ms. Barbara Cook, Chairman of the Committee, then reviewed recommendations for the future. She stated that it was important to put a new computer system in place that will encompass the Building Department, Planning and Zoning and the Assessor's office. She also recommended that penalties should be established for abuses, that retroactive billing begin immediately, that there should be increased communications between Town departments, and there should be greater public awareness of the Town's policies.

Ms. Klein thanked Ms. Cook and Mr. Wenger for a job well done and stated that the Board was in the process of scheduling more meetings with Department Heads and was also developing a project list that will include greater public awareness of Town policies.

**b) Wally Pugh, Internet Technology Committee – Proposal solicited from BlumShapiro**

Mr. Pugh reported that BlumShapiro Consulting created a Strategic Technology Plan Report, dated May 20, 2004, for the Town and identified the concern that the Town currently does not have an integrated, coordinated approach to managing Land Use permitting records and information. He stated that in this report BlumShapiro recommends a performing a software selection project for new Permit Processing/Land Use software which would enhance the processing of information between the Land Use departments and the Assessor's office with the goal of assessing taxes based on complete and accurate information.

Mr. Pugh stated that the IT Committee recommended approval of this proposal. He stated that the professional fees for the project would be approximately \$25,000 and the costs for the software, implementation, training and hardware which would be approximately \$90,000. He estimated that it would take six to eight weeks to perform the project and there was a window of opportunity in early spring to implement it.

The Board concurred that this item will be placed on the agenda for the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting for action to be taken.

**c) Consider and Take Action on a Resolution Establishing a Web Site Committee**

**\*\* MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A WEB SITE COMMITTEE.**

Ms. Klein discussed the make up of the Web Site Committee that would consist of 11 members, including 2 members from the Board of Selectmen, 1 from the Board of Finance, 1 RTM member, 1 ITC member, 3 members from Town Hall, 2 from the Library and 1 Community resident at large. She noted that she would serve on this Committee. Louise Berry, from the IT Committee, commented that they would serve more like a Task Force. It was discussed that the Web Site Committee should be directed by the First Selectwoman's office and report to the Board of Selectmen. The Board concurred to amend the resolution to state that the Committee will report to them.

**\*\* MS. THORNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDED RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A WEB SITE COMMITTEE AS FOLLOWS:**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN HEREBY ESTABLISHES A WEB SITE COMMITTEE. THE COMMITTEE SHALL BE DIRECTED BY THE FIRST SELECTWOMAN'S OFFICE AND WILL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN. THE COMMITTEE WILL BE COMPOSED OF 11 MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, BOARD OF FINANCE, REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING, THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE, TOWN DEPARTMENTS, DARIEN LIBRARY, AND ONE COMMUNITY RESIDENT AT LARGE.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE WEB SITE COMMITTEE SHALL COORDINATE THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF THE TOWN WEB SITE, WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO PROMOTE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND PROVIDE INFORMATION AND ONLINE SERVICES FOR TOWN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE WEB SITE COMMITTEE SHALL BE CHARGED WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

- PROVIDE STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT AND DIRECTION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN WEB SITE.**
- IDENTIFY, DISCUSS AND PRIORITIZE WEB SITE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS COMMON TO ALL DEPARTMENTS.**
- DEVELOP AND REVIEW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR WEB SITE USE AND DEVELOPMENT**
- ACT AS A SOUNDING BOARD FOR DEPARTMENTS REGARDING WEB SITE DECISIONS**
- PROVIDE A LIAISON TO THE DARIEN LIBRARY TO ASSURE THAT APPROPRIATE RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE LIBRARY TO ALLOW IT MEET FUNCTIONAL SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS THAT RESULT FROM THE DEVELOPMENT AN EVOLUTION OF THE TOWN WEB SITE.**

**\*\* DR. MICELI SECONDED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**d) Consider and Take Action on 2004/05 Sidewalk and Walkway options**

The Board reviewed a memo from Bob Steeger, dated August 26, 2004, clarifying the preferences of the Public Works Department with respect to sidewalk projects for the current fiscal year.

Ms. Klein commented that she spoke to Reese Hutchinson, and he said that he and other Post Road property owners are willing to repair the downtown Post Road sidewalks right now. Mr. Steeger stated that the cost to repair the downtown sidewalks would be 2/3 of the cost to the Town and 1/3 to the property owners. Mr. Steeger stated would obtain the costs to do the Post Road sidewalk project.

The Board also discussed the Brookside Road sidewalk project. Mr. Steeger reported that new asphalt sidewalks will be built on Brookside Road from Meadowbrook Road north to the Cherry Lawn Park entrance and the cost for this project would be \$75,000.

**\*\* MS. THORNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE BROOKSIDE ROAD SIDEWALK PROJECT.**

**\*\* MS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* DR. MICELI MOVED TO APPROVE THE POST ROAD SIDEWALK PROJECT.**

**\*\* MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (MR. HARREL).**

**e) Consider and Take Action on the Assignment of Parking Spaces for the Grove Street Project**

The Board reviewed a letter dated August 1, 2004 from Penny Glassmeyer and Jeremy Ginsberg's memo dated August 13, 2004 regarding the parking within the Grove Street parking lot. The Board reviewed Mr. Ginsberg's recommendation to move the location of twenty parking spaces that are reserved for the tenants of the buildings. Ms. Klein stated that she would discuss the recommendations with Penny Glassmeyer and will advise the Board of her decision.

**f) Consider and Take Action on a Resolution accepting the gift of two (2) buoys for Darien Harbor**

Ms. Santarella questioned who submitted the permit and signed the application for the gift and if the correct procedure followed. Mr. Crary replied that he would look into it. Ms. Santarella also stated that this did not come before the Board of Selectmen first. The Board thanked the Darien Sail & Power Squadron, the Noroton Yacht Club and the Darien Boat Club for their donation to purchase the two buoys.

**\*\* MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:**

**WHEREAS, PURSUANT TO 2.3 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN, THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN IS EMPOWERED ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN TO ACCEPT GIFTS PROVIDED THAT THE GIFTS DO NOT HAVE A VALUE IN EXCESS OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00); AND**

**WHEREAS, THE DARIEN SAIL & POWER SQUADRON, THE NOROTON YACHT CLUB AND THE DARIEN BOAT CLUB HAVE DONATED APPROXIMATELY \$2,200 TO PURCHASE TWO BUOYS TO MARK THE LOCATION OF ROCKS IN DARIEN HARBOR THAT ARE A DANGER TO BOATERS, AND**

**WHEREAS, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COASTAL WATERS HAS WORKED ON THIS IMPROVEMENT TO THE SAFETY OF BOATERS AND RECOMMENDS THE ACCEPTANCE OF THIS GIFT, NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

**RESOLVED, THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN HEREBY ACCEPTS THE GIFT OF TWO BUOYS TO MARK ROCK HAZARDS IN DARIEN HARBOR AND EXPRESSES ITS APPRECIATION TO THOSE INVOLVED ON BEHALF OF THE CITIZENS OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN.**

**\*\* MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**g) Consider and Take Action on a request to hold the Darien Road Race on September 19, 2004**

Ms. Klein reported that she was still waiting to receive something in writing regarding the Road Race. Ms. Santarella stated that she would like to see a proposal that showed exactly what they were going to do at the beaches because it was a circus last year and it affects the people going to the beach and the Boat Club. It was also discussed that a police officer should be hired to direct traffic.

**h) Discussion of possible revisions to the Town Charter/Code**

1. Increase the membership of the Police Commission
2. Establish Term Limits for Town Elective Offices
3. Increase the Term of the Office of First Selectman
4. Modifications to the Snow Shoveling Ordinance
5. Other

Ms. Klein stated that in January the Board voted to revise the Town Charter to help run Town Hall operations more smoothly. She asked the Board for their input as to what kind of changes they would like to see. Ms. Thorne stated that in 1997 the Charter Revision Commission initiated a study to improve the Town's services by sorting through the Charter and making recommendations. Mr. Harrel suggested that the Board invite members of the Charter Revision Commission at a roundtable to review their work because a lot of work went into it. Ms. Santarella stated that the Charter Revision Commission had a wealth of information, however the problem was the delivery of it to the public. She recommended that they form a Charter Revision Commission. Ms. Thorne commented this could also identify areas that were not previously looked at. Dr. Miceli stated that the Charter belonged to the people and should go to the public.

Mr. Seth Morton stated that he supported Ms. Santarella's recommendation to form a Charter Revision Commission but not go back to square one since some work has already been done. He stated that there was a crying need for change.

There was no action taken on this agenda item.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Klein asked there were any comments from the public at this time. There were no comments.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The following changes were made to the Minutes of the Special Meeting of August 16, 2004:

Page 1: First Selectwoman's Report: First Sentence: Ms. Klein said that she would like to discuss issues at the next meeting dealing with the term limits of the First Selectman and increasing the membership of the Police Commission.

Page 1: First Selectwoman's Report: Last paragraph: Add as the second sentence: Ms. Santarella requested that Charter Revision also be discussed at the next meeting.

Page 2: New Business: MOTION: Change to Dr. Miceli.

Page 3: Second Paragraph: change to 22 years.

Page 3: MOTION: Change to Mr. Harrel.

**\*\* DR. MICELI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 16, 2004 AS AMENDED.**

- \*\* MS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (MS. THORNE).**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- \*\* MR. HARREL MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:00 P.M. TO INTERVIEW SUSAN CAMERON, NOMINEE OF THE REPUBLICAN TOWN COMMITTEE, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION, AND JENNIFER ROBINSON FOR APPOINTMENT AS DARIEN'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF C-MED (EMERGENCY MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTER).**  
**\*\* DR. MICELI SECONDED.**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

September 7, 2004	Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting at 5:30 p.m.
September 7, 2004	Planning & Zoning Commission Planning Meeting at 8:00 p.m.
September 7, 2004	Planning & Zoning Commission General Meeting at 8:00 p.m.
September 15, 2004	Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
September 16, 2004	Operations Planning Committee Meeting at 12:00 p.m.
September 20, 2004	Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
September 21, 2004	Board of Finance Regular Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

(A two-thirds majority vote is required to add an item to the agenda.)

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna DeVito  
Telesco Secretarial Services